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Grace Baptist Church

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Grace Baptist Church

by Entzminger Autumn

I attended Grace Baptist Church at 1006 Williamstown Dr. Dumfries, VA 22026 on Sunday, September 27th at 10:30 am. They have different preachers at each service time. The preacher at the 10:30 am service I attended name was Dr. Derek Grier and he is the founding pastor of the church. I went with my Mom, my Brother, and my Sister.

From the outside of the building it was obviously a new building and very nice and classy. The church didn't look like an older church it looked really new and up to date. The parking wasn't really that great because they had too many people attending for their small parking lot so me and my family had to park a little far. They had people directing traffic that were really helpful finding us a parking spot across the street and telling us where we could park. Walking to the church everyone seemed nice and friendly and they were greeting us with warm smiles. The scenery was really nice and the church was at a nice location.

Walking in to the church I was kind of nervous because I felt like they could tell I was new and haven't been to a service at the church before. I was a little lost when I walked in and didn't know where exactly I was going. The inside seemed new as well and I didn't notice any art or symbolic images. The building was obviously very well kept and clean. It was more formal than casual and everyone was dressed nice. The people who worked for the church were able to guide me and my family

in the right direction. They greeted us with warm smiles and asked us if we were first time visitors. Since we were first time visitors we filled out a little paper they had for us. They asked us a little of our information to make us feel welcomed and like we mattered. I thought that was nice and made me feel a little more welcomed and appreciated. The people who worked at the church were able to show us where to go to get to the service.

Walking in to the actual service I was even more nervous than before because there was so many people already in the room so it was really crowded already. The ushers were able to help me and my family find somewhere to sit closer to the back but at least we got a seat. No one offered to sit with us but the sanctuary was already crowded. There was a group of people singing on this stage and musicians playing instruments behind them. They were obviously singing songs related to the religion and giving praise. The room was a little big not too huge but a nice size. Everybody was clapping along and giving praise. Everyone seemed kind and happy to be there. The mood wasn't emotional it was more like everyone was celebrating and thankful. The singing went on for about ten minutes and then they went on to the announcements of upcoming events the church was having. They asked all the first time visitors to stand up and they clapped for us and gave us a warm welcome. When we stood up they also gave us a booklet with information about them and all their services.

At that point I felt more comfortable and not so much an outsider.

I realized the church wasn't so much like a tradition old baptist church that you would see in the movies. The church was more modern and the songs they sang were more modern day style. I also noticed there wasn't a lot of elderly people there the oldest person I saw was maybe in their 40's or 50's so that was a little surprising to me. Most of the people looked like they could be in their 40's. I expected to see more elderly people than younger people just because of how different the new generation is today. The church was also diverse and I liked that about it. There was many young families and young adults there too. Most of the people looked like local and like the people from that area. The members didn't look poor or rich so I would say they were middle class families. I saw mostly African Americans and then I saw some Hispanic members of the church.

After the singing and the welcoming of visitors the Pastor came out and said a quick prayer. Then he goes on to tell us what he was going to be preaching about and what scripture he was going to talk about. After he told us what scripture everyone opened their bibles to read along. He preached for about maybe 20-25 minutes so that was quicker than I initially thought it was going to be. When he was talking it wasn't in like a monotone so it was actually interesting. The Pastor was maybe in his 40's so he was full of energy and I could actually listen to him without falling asleep. I think he had a good message and I enjoyed the sermon. After he was done preaching they dismissed us and the service was over.

Overall it was a nice experience I think. The

service seemed more ritual. I liked how organized they were they started on time and we got out at a reasonable time. The service was short and not dragged out so I liked that about it. I didn't necessarily feel uncomfortable maybe more shy if anything. We didn't know anyone there and had never been there before so I think anyone would feel a little shy and nervous in that situation. To me most of the people were nice and smiled at us or greeted us so I liked that. Nobody thought they were better than us and to me that was important. They really went out of their way to make us feel welcomed and to make sure we knew where we were going. If I had a question I felt comfortable enough to ask one of the people working there. I think the service was great and I would definitely go back. •

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